

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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R 201927Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3675
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ARA FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN
USINFO FOR IOP/M, ILA

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TAGS: PFOR, OAS, UY
SUBJ: OFFICIAL REACTION TO THE PRESIDENT'S OAS SPEECH, PART II

REF: (A) STATE 84912, (B) MONTEVIDEO 1472, (C) MONTEVIDEO 1481

1. SUMMARY. PUBLICLY AND PRIVATELY, GOU OFFICIALS HAVE REACTED POSITIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S OAS SPEECH. TREATMENT OF LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES AS FULL-FLEDGED MEMBERS OF THE WORLD COMMUNITY AND THE PRESIDENT'S EXPRESSION OF HIGH REGARD FOR THEIR INDIVIDUALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY WERE PARTICULARLY WELL RECEIVED. FONMIN ROVIRA ENDORSED THE PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL FOR A GREATER EXCHANGE OF PEOPLE, EXPRESSING THE DESIRE THAT A BROAD SPECTRUM OF AMERICANS COME HERE TO JUDGE THE REALITY OF URUGUAY FOR THEMSELVES. REACTIONS WERE LIMITED TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS RELATED ASPECTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, REFLECTING AGAIN THE FACT THAT THE ATMOSPHERE SURROUNDING OUR RELATIONS WITH THIS COUNTRY HAVE BEEN PERMEATED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS,
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FREQUENTLY TO THE EXCLUSION OF OTHER MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE.
END SUMMARY

2. IN A PRIVATE CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR, AND LATER IN A NEWSPAPER INTERVIEW, FONMIN ROVIRA INDICATED THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THE POLICY INITIATIVES OUTLINED IN THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH WERE WELCOMED HERE BY THE GOU. THE

FOREIGN MINISTER, IN AN INFORMAL CONVERSATION WITH THE AMBASSADOR, SAID HE FOUND PRESIDENT CARTER'S SPEECH TO BE POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE AND BELIEVED IT SET THE RIGHT TONE AND PERSPECTIVE. HE ADDED A VIEW, WHICH HAS BEEN SET FORTH LOCALLY, THAT HE HAD NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT'S REFERENCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS HAD FOLLOWED THE REFERENCES TO INDIVIDUALISM AND SOVEREIGNTY OF EACH NATION. IN A TOAST GIVEN BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER DURING HIS FAREWELL JUNCHEON FOR THE AMBASSADOR, THE FORMER MENTIONED THE CURRENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES, BUT POINTED TO THE DEEP AND CONTINUING FRIENDSHIP AND THE COMMON TIES BETWEEN THE TWO.

3. IN AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH LA MANANA, A PRO-GOVERNMENT DAILY, THE FONMIN REITERATED THESE VIEWS IN GREATER DEPTH. NOTING THAT THE TRADITIONAL FRIENDLY TIES WHICH UNITED URUGUAY AND THE U.S. ARE STILL PRESENT, THE FONMIN SAID THAT THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAD DEVELOPED RECENTLY WERE DUE IN LARGE PART TO "INCOMPREHENSION ON THE PART OF THE U.S. OF OUR PROBLEMS AND THOSE OF LATIN AMERICA, A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF OUR TRUE SITUATION, AND, FUNDAMENTALLY, CONFUSION OVER WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE WORLD". RECALLING THE "IMMEDIATE AND VIGOROUS REACTION TO WELL-KNOWN INTERVENTIONIST" ATTEMPTS, THE FONMIN SAID THE CARTER SPEECH SIGNIFIES A NEW ATTITUDE ON THE PART OF THE U.S., ONE WHICH IS "MORE CAUTIOUS AND TEMPERATE, ONE OF A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE POLITICAL REALITIES OF OUR COUNTRIES."

4. RIVIRA ALSO MADE REFERENCE TO THE PRESIDENT'S POINT THAT THE U.S. INTENDS TO DEVELOP A POLICY TOWARD LATIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AMERICA WHICH TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE DIVERSITY AND POTENTIAL OF EACH NATION. PARAPHRASING THE PRESIDENT'S SPEECH HE REPEATED THE THREE BASIC ELEMENTS WHICH WILL GUIDE THAT POLICY, INCLUDING OUR CONCERN FOR THE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS. THE FONMIN SAID THIS NEW POLICY DIRECTION WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR URUGUAY AND THE OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO HAVE A RECIPROCAL AND CONSTRUCTIVE COOPERATION WITH THE "DEMOCRACY OF THE NORTH". HE ADDED THAT THIS WAS A LONG WAY FROM HAVING THE U.S. ACTING AS "PROSECUTOR, AND JUDGE" OF THESE COUNTRIES' INTERNAL AFFAIRS, UNDER THE "SUBJECTIVE INVOCATION" OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNS.

5. THE FONMIN ALSO RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO THE PRESIDENT'S EMPHASIS ON PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PROGRAMS AND HE CALLED FOR A MORE SEARCHING INVESTIGATION OF THE POLITICAL, SOCIAL AND

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ACTION ARA-10

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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ECONOMIC REALITIES OF URUGUAY THROUGH VISITS OF SCIENTISTS, SOCIOLOGISTS, HISTORIANS, JURISTS, JOURNALISTS, CONGRESSMEN, SENATORS AND DIPLOMATS WHO COULD INFORM THE USG AND THE AMERICAN PUBLIC OF THE REALITIES OF URUGUAY.

6. THE FONMIN'S REACTION WAS ECHOED BY HIS SUB-SECRETARY WHO TOLD THE DCM THAT HE HAD FOUND THE SPEECH POSITIVE AND PRAGMATIC. IT WAS TO HIM A WELCOME CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS STATEMENTS OF POLICY WHICH WERE OFTEN OVERLY OPTIMISTIC AND CONTAINED MANY COMMITMENTS DIFFICULT TO REALIZE, OR NEVER REALIZED. THE PRESIDENT OF URUGUAY'S LEGISLATIVE BODY, THE COUNCIL OF STATE, TOLD THE PAO THAT HE HAD BEEN VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE REFERENCES TO THE NECESSITY TO RECOGNIZE THE INDIVIDUALITY AND SOVEREIGNTY OF ALL COUNTRIES. MILITARY REACTION WAS HARDER TO COME BY ALTHOUGH ARMY CINC VADORA WAS REPORTED TO HAVE FOUND THE SPEECH TO BE MODERATE AND BALANCED, AND, ACCORDING TO ARMATT, HE EXHIBITED GUARDED OPTIMISM WITH RESPECT TO U.S./LATIN AMERICAN POLICY. TWO LOWER RANKING OFFICERS IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS SAID THAT WHILE THE SPEECH WAS INTERESTING, MORE TIME WAS NECESSARY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE PRESIDENT'S WORDS WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED BY CLEARER POLICIES WHICH WOULD IN FACT BE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONSISTENT WITH THE CONTENT OF HIS SPEECH.

7. IN GENERAL, URUGUAYAN OFFICIALS SAW IN THE SPEECH A

MOVE TOWARDS A POLICY THEY WOULD ADVOCATE, ONE OF REGARD FOR SOVEREIGNTY AND INDIVIDUALITY. THEY ALSO READ INTO THE SPEECH A CHANGE IN U. S. TACTICS WITH RESPECT TO HUMAN RIGHTS (NOT A CHANGE IN OBJECTIVES) AND CLEARLY HOPE THAT THE TIME OF PUBLIC CHASTISEMENT IS OVER. ROVIRA'S SUPPORT FOR THE PRESIDENT'S STRESS ON PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE PROGRAMS REFLECTED A LONG-STANDING URUGUAYAN DESIRE TO HAVE AMERICANS COME TO URUGUAY TO JUDGE FOR THEMSELVES WHAT THIS COUNTRY IS REALLY LIKE AND TO EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF LIFE HERE. THEY WOULD WELCOME WHAT THEY CONSIDER OBJECTIVE VISITORS. HOWEVER, THEY FEAR THAT SOME ESTABLISHED HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS, SUCH AS AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, WOULD COME WITH THE INTENTION OF BUILDING A CASE TO SUPPORT PRE-CONCEIVED NOTIONS ABOUT URUGUAY AND THEY HAVE MADE IT CLEAR THAT SUCH GROUPS WOULD NOT BE WELCOME. THE ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH OUR RELATIONS WITH URUGUAY ARE CONDUCTED HAS BEEN SO PERMEATED WITH HUMAN RIGHTS THAT NO URUGUAYAN OFFICIAL COMMENTED ON THE PRESIDENT'S OTHER PROPOSALS SUCH AS THE SIGNING OF PROTOCOL I OF THE TREATY OF TLATELOLCO, CONVENTIONAL ARMS ACQUISITIONS OR THE TRANSFER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY.

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